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## PATRONAGE IN OFFICES AGAIN.

In the October number of "The Century" Mr. Henry Cabot Lodge declares that the refusal of a public man to deal with patronage is a mere shrinking of duty, and that offices will be emptied and filled by any President of any party for personal or political motives, and that for so doing he is not censurable.

It is not our purpose to attempt to weaken the force of an article, excellent and scholarly in the whole, but since Mr. Lodge has gone out of his way to defend acts which he says should be forbidden by law, protest should be made on the ground of political morality. What he here says throws light on his well-known public course in dealing with patronage, and in his advocacy of such measures as the Force bill. It is not unfair to him to state that he maintains that, until the "evil and degrading system of political patronage" in the distribution of public offices is rooted out by law, a public man shrinks his duty in not practicing the methods of that system. Because some men commit "evil and degrading" acts not forbidden by law men are in duty bound to resort to the same methods w<sup>th</sup> the end more likely to get an ultimate advantage.

Of course this argument invades the perpetuation of every evil of the spoils system until a law shall be specifically covering them all. His position finds no analogy. In that takes by an American historical writer, who shares many of the public views of Mr. Lodge, that the Quakers were at fault in their mere practice of Christian submission to the horrors of Indian warfare. We leave the historical question to apologetic writers, but cannot pass by the doctrine that political acts which should be forbidden by law can ever be justified in practice.

A colleague of Mr. Lodge said recently that he thought other members of Congress were violating the spirit if not the letter of the law in securing certain appointments, and if that were so he would have to get his share also.

On the other hand, we believe that this view is quite exceptional and that the number of public men who act on the same principles which inspired the Quakers, and who refrain from public acts which are inherently injurious to the public service and of harmful example, is much greater than is commonly supposed. Many members of Congress, and those, too, who have the least trouble in their re-election, take the least part in emptying and filling offices for personal or political motives. When public men trick their consciences with legal subtleties, and declare that there are exceptions in the application of the moral law to politics, just as in dealings with Indians, it is time to protest in the name of the nation from which they proceed.

EPPERSON asked what we were to do with pie if we did not eat it. Mr. Lodge must eat political pie as long as there is any.

The present Civil Service act has operated indirectly to a large extent upon the unclassified service. The effect of taking thirty two thousand places out of the spoils, would naturally provoke the scramble for the remaining places all the faster; but the moral effect of the new system, by induction, was to assist as to bring out the evils of the old system in bold contrast and to make methods contemptible except to men with the coddle of an alligator.

There has thus been a great diminution of the use of patronage for selfish ends. This diminution is steadily going on, and in time would consign the evils to be remedied to the limbo of wrongs not needed to be cognized by law.

It was of the first importance to the outset to test the new system broadly enough to demonstrate its failure by attempting too much.

Ex-Commissioner Emerick was said: "If the law could only be made acceptable and efficacious by a gradual process and development of its utility, and by strictly economical methods. In other and older nations where similar laws have come into force, their adoption has only been effected after a great lapse of time, through experience and patient deliberation. Any attempt to expand it per saltus in this country, as to make it pervade all the departments of the Government and to make large appropriations for the purpose necessary, were calculated to make it more odious if not to defeat it entirely."

All of the executive service cannot at once be taken out of politics, but in the meantime the evils of spoils can be greatly reduced by the sound example of public men and the spread of strong moral sentiment, the triumph of right being a question of majority.

Mr. Lodge is inaccurate in speaking of the substitution of patronage offices with those under the Civil Service law. Several of the most important and fundamental provisions of the law extend to the entire public service, assuring the right of the private citizen to freedom from the control of executive officers, and the right of such officers to freedom from the control of parties and

factions and prohibiting political nomination.

The civil service rules, under the authority of the President independently of the act, observe that any officer in the classified or unclassified service, who uses his official influence to interfere in elections or is connected in the direction of any person for certain purposes, must be discharged from office. As far as in this case, the result through compromise must be upon merit, as no executive officer can be upon the same basis and a reward from that service for personal efforts a violation of the rules, published by himself from office.

In view of these plain provisions of law and an increasing public opposition to it, it is to be seen how Mr. Lodge can invert the logic of those and justify his of the justified acts in his unclassified service. Already pronounces by successive steps in editing the paper of First Assistant Postmaster General he made a victory in the Railway Mail Service to be followed by the next system of examination, thus taking a high place out of patronage. Success in "practical politics" and the making of a name in the world" are to be sought only by means definable in themselves, and not for an ulterior end, or no end.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, in his life of JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, describes the opposition to the administration of Mr. Adams as more determined, bitter and unscrupulous than any which has ever assailed a President of the United States; but yet he says of him: "His views of the sacred nature of the trust imposed upon him by his fellow citizens were too exalted to allow him to disseminate the power with which it clothed him to the promotion of party or personal interests." Neither did an opposition to his administration alone, except there was a marked practical indifference for office, ever induce him to remove an individual from a public station."

This and many like expressions of high authorities may be commended to Mr. Lodge, who declares that no man can administer a patronage system except by emptying and filling offices in his gift for personal or political motives, and that it is the duty of a public man engaged in "practical politics" to secure such plaudits for office, even induce him to remove an individual from a public station."

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